

III. Amendments to the Drawings

The attached New Sheet of drawing includes Figure 4. Figure 4 has been added to illustrate the detachable half shaft assembly being detached from the shaft bell, as set forth in claim 9. The basis for this amendment may be found in the specification and claims as originally filed. More specifically, the specification clearly mentions that the detachable half shaft assembly 12 is detachable from the shaft bell 14 or the disc rotor 16: "The detachable half shaft assembly 12 is detached from the shaft bell 14 or the disc rotor 16." (Original Para. [0018] (now Para. [0019])). See also claims 1 and 9 as originally filed.

Further, the attached Replacement Sheets of drawings include Figures 1-3. These sheets of drawings are being replaced merely to correct the notation near the top to show that each sheet is counted from a total number of four sheets.

III. Remarks

Claims 9-11 are pending and rejected. By this paper, claims 9 and 10 have been amended as discussed below. With the amendments and remarks provided herewith, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections. Support for the above amendments is found in Applicants' specification as originally filed.

In the Drawings

Responsive the Examiner's objection to the drawings as not showing every element of the claims, Applicants have added Figure 4. Figure 4 is believed to show any elements that are missing from the other Figures, and thus favorable consideration is requested. Support for the amendments to the drawings is found in Applicants' specification as originally filed. Entry of these amendments is respectfully requested.

In the Specification

Specification paragraphs that are now numbered as [0013] and [0019] have been amended to describe newly added Figure 4. New Figure 4 is based on the text of the specification as originally filed, as well as knowledge of those having ordinary skill in the art at the time this patent application was filed. No new matter has been added. Paragraphs [0011] and [0012] have been amended for clerical reasons to accommodate paragraph [0013], which describes Figure 4. Paragraphs [0014] – [0018] and [0020] – [0029] have been amended merely to renumber the paragraphs

to accommodate the addition of the description of Figure 4. Entry of these amendments is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, para. 2

Responsive to the rejection of claims 9-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention, Applicants respectfully assert that Applicants have distinctly claimed the subject matter which they regard as the invention. The Examiner has stated that "Claim 9 is indefinite due to the fact that it is unclear how the 'detachable half shaft' may be 'detached from the shaft bell'; given the fact that shaft bell and half shaft are shown as integral elements in the drawings." Applicants assert that the half shaft and the shaft bell are not shown as integral elements, but rather, as assembled elements, wherein the half shaft may be detached from the shaft bell, as one having ordinary skill in the art would understand. The half shaft is assembled to the shaft bell in any conventional way, as one having ordinary skill in the art would understand, and such half shaft may be detached for service, as explained in Applicants' Background section. Further, Applicants assert that there is nothing indefinite about claim 9, which states that the detachable half shaft may be detached from the shaft bell. For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112 para. 2, and allow claims 9-11.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Responsive to the rejections of claims 9-11 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,158,124 to Austin ("Austin"), Austin fails to teach

each and every element of the subject matter as claimed in amended claim 9 of the present application. For example, currently amended claim 9 recites that the stepped boss and the roll formed face engage the bearing assembly to maintain the preload on the detachable shaft when the detachable half shaft assembly is detached from the shaft bell or the disc rotor. *Austin* does not show the preload being maintained on a detachable shaft, but rather, the preload is maintained on a hub 14. The Examiner has stated in the Office Action of June 25, 2007 that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., the bearing being preloaded and maintained about the detachable shaft) are not recited in the rejected claims. Thus, Applicants have amended the claims such that these features are included in independent claim 9. For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants assert that independent claim 9, and claims 10 and 11 dependent therefrom, are now in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

Thus, claims 9-11 are in a condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

/Bonnie R. Shaw/
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Attachment: Replacement Sheet(s) of Drawings
New Sheet of Drawing